

GREATER BRIGHTON ECONOMIC BOARD

10am 16 OCTOBER 2024

QEII MEETING ROOM, THE SHOREHAM CENTRE

MINUTES

Present:

Councillors: Bella Sankey (Chair), Sophie Cox, Jeremy Gardner, Ty Goddard, Francis Mitchell, Natasha Bridge, Andy Hill, Rachael Harding, Peter Sharp Catherine Howe, Sophie Cox, Jess Gibbons, Andrew Swayne, Debbie Keeley, Dean Orgill, Carl Roberts, Martin Lewry, Amy Galea, Sue Bannister, Ian Fitzpatrick,

PART ONE

6 – Procedural Business

Apologies: Zoe Nicholson, Michael Jones, Robert Eggleston

a) **Declaration of Substitutes**

There were no substitutes

b) **Declarations of Interests**

There were no interests declared.

c) **Exclusion of press and public**

There were no Part Two items, therefore the press and public were not excluded.

7 – Minutes of the Previous Meeting

7.1 The Minutes of the previous meeting were agreed as correct record.

8 – Chair's Communications

8.1 Councillor Sankey shared the following communications:

8.2 Our board launched the Sussex energy mission in July. It was so positive to see so many organizations from right across Sussex at that event, which, obviously came straight after our board meeting of July, and committing their support to our ambition for Sussex to be energy neutral by 2040.

8.3 The paper presented to the board today outlines the progress made since that launch and sets out the next steps required to take this really crucial program of

work forward, and I look forward to discussing it further this morning.

- 8.4 Also, on our agenda today, NHS Sussex ICB are one of the many wider stakeholders that have helped shape our Sussex energy mission so far. However, whilst their support and commitment to this work will continue, the ICB are keen to more formally support the work of this board. To that end they wrote to me in my capacity as chair to request that they become a formal member of the business partnership. The paper for consideration today sets out the rationale for the ICB joining the board and Amy Galea and Dominic Emmet are here to present to us later on this morning.
- 8.5 The paper on devolution sets out what has occurred in the devolution space since we last met in July. I think it's fair to say that broad consensus is that in line with other areas that have already had a devolution settlement in this country, The government's renewed commitments to devolution presents an opportunity for our region. We all understand and agree that there is a need to move forwards, or risk being left behind. The initial conversations that have taken place across Sussex are about how best to explore that opportunity. There is an understanding that we need to know more from government around their vision for devolution in England, and so we're very much looking forward to seeing a revised framework for devolution and a movement towards the devolution bill and hopefully we'll see more information from government before the end of this year.
- 8.6 In July, the board agreed to contribute towards the costs of the living coast biosphere developing its new ten-year strategy and applying to UNESCO for redesignation for 2024-34. The living coast has been in existence since 2014, and every 10 years UNESCO requires biospheres to take stock of the work that has been delivered, consult all local stakeholders to shape in future strategy and apply for official renewal of the designation. Associated with redesignation includes consultancy fees and activities such as research, stakeholder engagement and communications. Biospheres receive no funding from UNESCO or national government, so this funding for the crucial work was sought from our partner bodies and other strategic stakeholders.
- 8.7 The final papers, including the forward looking 10-year plan was submitted last month in accordance with the hard deadline set by UNESCO, and we optimistically await the outcome, which is due in early 2025.
- 8.8 One final note from me before we get going and that is about the fact that our board support team have been working with colleagues in the department for business and trade to arrange a two-day visit for this region for their tech investment team. The tech investment team work with overseas investors to attract inward investment into the UK. This visit is scheduled for the 6th and 7th of

November, and I believe it's a great opportunity for us to showcase why this region is such a fantastic place for businesses, particularly tech businesses. The tech team's key technology of interest include AI, quantum, cyber security, semiconductors and telecoms, and the agenda for the visit in November has been framed accordingly. The first day will be hosted by the University of Sussex, it will feature lab tours and introductions to a number of emerging technologies, including quantum. Colleagues working in the wider technology ecosystem will be using case studies to highlight the importance of the support mechanisms and wider networks in our area. There will then be a networking session where the tech team will be able to engage with business in the AI sector, and on the second day, the team will be visiting businesses in Shoreham and Littlehampton. I believe this is a really exciting opportunity for the members of this board to demonstrate to government and indeed foreign investors, the opportunities that exist in our region and how we are very much open for business. So, I really look forward to working with colleagues more on that project.

9 – GBEB Sussex Energy Update

- 9.1 Natasha Bridge introduced the report to the board.
- 9.2 Andrew Swayne commended the foundations of the report and drew attention to additional challenges faced by the private and privately owned housing sectors. Andrew Swayne stated that they had been in conversation with Sussex Bay regarding carbon emissions from ports in the County.
- 9.3 Sophie Cox outlined the importance of including stakeholders that are not yet directly involved with the initiative.
- 9.4 The chair invited the board to vote on the report.

Vote

- 9.5 A vote was taken, and the board agreed the recommendations unanimously.

Resolved:

- 2.1 That the Board noted the progress on Sussex Energy since the launch.
- 2.2 That the Board supported the next steps needed to take Sussex Energy forward: Formalising a network of collaborators and working with them to prepare a bid for funding to build capacity.

2.3 That the Board agreed to receive a further update on Sussex Energy at the March 2025 Board meeting.

10 – Admission of new member to the board

10.1 Andrew Hill introduced the report to the board.

10.2 Amy Galea of the ICB outlined the role of the ICB, highlighting a commitment to improve outcomes of the population's health, tackling inequalities, enhancing productivity & value for money, and supporting social and economic development.

10.3 Members of the board welcomed the ICB and stated their beliefs that the ICB would form a core component of the Greater Brighton Economic Board.

10.4 The chair invited the board to vote on the report.

Vote

10.5 A vote was taken, and the board agreed the recommendations unanimously.

Resolved:

2.1 That the Board agreed to formally invite the NHS Sussex ICB to become a constituent member of the Board, joining the GBBP subject to both their agreement and formal ratification from the Board's member organisations.

11 - Devolution

11.1 Andrew Hill introduced the report to the board.

11.2 Members of the board welcomed the report, expressed enthusiasm for devolution in Sussex and suggested areas of specific focus including travel and road improvements on the A27. There was broad consensus of a pan-Sussex devolution deal, rather than merging with other counties.

11.3 The chair invited the board to vote on the report.

Vote

11.4 A vote was taken, and the board agreed the recommendations unanimously.

Resolved:

2.1 That the Board notes the EOI that has been submitted to Government by Brighton & Hove City Council.

2.2 That the Board notes that East Sussex County Council and West Sussex County Council have also submitted EOIs to the Secretary of State.

